

**SPECIAL MEETING
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE**

February 11, 2001

5:30 PM

Chairman Lopez called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Lopez, Sysyn, Pinard, Shea, DeVries

Messrs: F. Rusczek, L. Buccino, B. Vigneault

Chairman Lopez addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Communication from Mayor Robert Baines regarding the restructuring of health, elderly and youth services into a Department of Public Health and Community Services.

Chairman Lopez stated I think the first thing we will do if it is okay with the Committee is to have the presentation and then we will hear from the department heads who are affected and then we can hear from other people like the Chairman of the Elderly Services Commission who I think is here. With that, Fred please make your presentation.

Mr. Rusczek stated first I need to point out that as we talk about the restructuring of the Health Department, Office of Youth Services and the Elderly Services Department I think it is important to understand that this is not in any way related to a senior services center. This is all about the functions and services. The other thing I would like to point out is you just received a new one of these. This is the same document that was sent to the Aldermen last year, but this one is a little bit different than the one that is before the Human Resources and Insurance Committee. That document was an older version and I will point out quickly a few changes on it. One of them is the organizational chart. The organizational chart that is proposed is different than what you saw in your aldermanic package. The other is the timeline or the process findings and as we go through I will highlight those. First, I want to give you a little bit of a background. This has been part of a process that has been going on for awhile. Back in November of 2000 Mayor Baines asked me to put together a concept of restructuring the three departments as a starting point for interdepartmental discussion and analysis. In the period between December of 2000 and February of 2001, key staff from the three departments and Welfare at the time met several times to discuss and fine-

tune the service integration concept. The key staff included the department heads and all of the key supervisory staff. In February of 2001 when the plan was put together, the Health Department and Office of Youth Services concurred with the proposed restructuring and the Elderly Services Department expressed concern that being part of a larger organization could reduce the identity and visibility of elderly services, as well as strip elderly services resources for other purposes. It was for that reason that the process kind of slowed down so you will see between February of 2001 and June of 2001, in June Wayne Robinson and myself met with the Elderly Services Commission and the Elderly Services Commission expressed the same concern that the Elderly Services Director shared. In August we amended the plan and this was a plan that was sent to the Aldermen, which incorporates the Elderly Services Department as it currently is under the proposed Public Health and Community Services. In other words, the process took into account the concern that identity would be lost by setting up the Elderly Services Department within this larger umbrella as it currently is without any changes. Just to give you a little bit of a background on the departments involved, the three departments, as well as the Employee Assistance Program, currently the Manchester Health Department has about 63 full-time equivalent staff and over half of our staff are serving Manchester's children through our school health program. The Elderly Services Department currently has about 4.5 full-time equivalents and the Office of Youth Services has about 6 full-time equivalents and the Manchester Employee Assistance Program has about 2 full-time equivalents. For the past few years the Health Department has been handling the financial and accounting stuff for the Office of Youth Services and the Employee Assistance Program. The missions of the departments involved. These are missions that were taken out of the budget presentations that were made to the Aldermen last year. For the Elderly Services Department their mission is that the department "shall plan, develop and implement those programs that will best serve the elderly." For the Office of Youth Services it is "the Office of Youth Services working in conjunction with the Police Department, schools, youth serving agencies and parents has the mission of promoting a quick response to the problems of youth utilizing the resources of the community and the Health Department's mission is "to protect the public health through disease and injury prevention activities and to promote behavioral and environmental changes that will improve the health and well-being of the public." In those missions there are similarities. All three departments exist to improve the health, well being and quality of life of those that we serve. The other human services department in City government is the Welfare Department. The difference between these three departments and the Welfare Department is collectively we provide the health and human services for the community at large. The services are provided without any income or guidelines. When we look at public health and community services it is also important to understand that we are just one partner amongst several community agencies that provide health and human services but our role is unique

and our role is important in that it is our responsibility to assess the community needs and issues and to develop an appropriate community response – a Citywide response, with our partnering agencies to insure a high quality of life for our Manchester residents. In other words, City government is held to a little higher order in terms of what we do to steer services within the community. I looked at two other communities in Northern New England to see how they were organized and these are two other large communities in New Hampshire and Maine. One of them is Nashua, NH. Nashua currently has a Department of Health and Community Services and although the City doesn't fund or provide elderly services, it does consolidate the other human service functions within the Department of Health and Community Services. They provide the array of public health and environmental health services that we do. The Welfare program is underneath the Department of Health and Community Services and their mediation program is in some ways like our Office of Youth Services where they serve youth with some of the issues they will face. They also tie in an individual or two to promote childcare. Portland, ME also has a Department of Health and Human Services and they have four divisions. They are organized a little differently. They have a Division of Social Services that includes some of the Welfare and supportive type programs. They also run their own nursing home so that makes them vastly different from us. They have a Division of Public Health that does a lot of the routine things that we do and they have an Office of Elder Affairs. They, too, have incorporated their senior services within the Department of Health and Human Services. When we looked at some of the issues that all three departments face, we realized that Manchester is growing in both size and the percentage of our population in need of services. Our population is also becoming much more culturally diverse. In the Health Department today, we have translators for five other languages besides English and we certainly see that that is very important to the services we provide. The other piece that is changing in Manchester rapidly is the population above age 65 and I chose age 65 because it was easy to compare a 65 and up to the last census information from 1990 because that is how it is most easily pulled out. In between today, say Year 2000 and 2015, our senior service population is expected to grow by about 50% here in Manchester and actually grow even more so in the outskirts of Manchester. The question that we started out with was what is the purpose of restructuring the Elderly, Health and Youth Services Departments. First, it is important that the purpose was not to eliminate positions. As the needs are growing, it is important to try to find a way to meet the needs within the resources we have so that any growth in resources can go directly to services. At the same time, the value of providing an integrated City system of public health and community services to address health and human services needed across all age groups. In other words, there will be one City department that will speak to newborns all the way through elderly and be able to provide a continuity of message and a continuity of services through the age groups. One of the most important outcomes is to streamline the

administrative activities, such as payroll and budgeting with the saved administrative time being redirected to programs and community services. Within some of the departments, including the Health Department, it becomes difficult and impossible and not warranted to have a number of people learn the City's financial system; for all of us to learn the HTE system and to be inputting budgets and maintaining the knowledge of what is needed to input that for what may be a very small workload. For that reason the Office of Youth Services and the Health Department combined some years ago to relieve that workload for the Office of Youth Services. Improved efficiencies. Again the plan here is not to eliminate staff but to redirect department head time that is going to the administrative functions to program development and services. There is also a savings that we really didn't look at too closely, but savings to other City departments like the Finance Department, Human Resources, and Information Systems where now all of the sudden instead of having three departments you have one to deal with and there isn't a redundancy in paper and systems and what have you. For a department that might be in the same facility, say if the Office of Youth Services and Health were in the same facility, obviously there is a savings from shared telephones, photocopying, conference space, purchasing practices and what have you. When the departments met, we discussed how we would like to go through a transition and we came up with...this was done collectively and we came up with a one year plan where the staff from the three departments would collectively analyze operational issues and community needs and would then develop a plan for enhanced services. When I brought my concept plan to the other departments the one thing that came out was and one thing I strongly support is before we jump into any plan of restructuring or whatever we really need to have the staffs, when they come under one department, work together and figure out what makes the most sense in terms of services and eventually organizational design. There would be quarterly reports to the Mayor and Aldermen. It is envisioned that the first report would address service needs. From there we would address our plans and how we would like to meet the service needs. We would look at the accomplishments so that we are not throwing out the baby with the bath water and see what works well and then we would design the organization as well as the budget and the strategic plan and the five-year plan to meet our organizational issues. The Health Department for some years has had a service excellence team known as ours and it is, in fact, our total quality management team. Down in the Health Department there is certainly no way for a department head to be an expert in all of the different aspects of our work. We rely upon our staff and we work with our staff as a team. It is within that same environment that we feel that we would need to design the structure for the future. The other piece that we have learned through our community interaction through the years is that really when the City makes a move we need to consider other community agencies. We would envision within our one-year transition period that we would involve community agencies in our planning process to hear where they are going so they could share

with us their ideas as to where they think the City should be going. The interim organizational structure that would be created for this transition period would be one that could be reverted back to the current structure of government if the transition period found that the restructuring is not going as envisioned. Some of the other outcomes, I think we would see that we would have collaboration on youth services through a close relationship between our school health activities and youth services staff. By the way I need to tell you that in the past and certainly we envision in the future that whatever the outcome, the three departments do work together. There is overlap sometime between services but not duplication. There are youth service functions that we do down at the Health Department like adolescent pregnancy prevention, the smokeless Saturdays for kids who are caught with tobacco and some tobacco prevention activities that we work closely with the Youth Services Department on now and certainly through the years we have worked with the Elderly Services Department on improving immunizations. I think it is important that we all understand that the departments do work together. While there is overlap, the piece we are missing perhaps is the coordinated or the unified message to the public in terms of what we do and where we are going. By bringing everybody together though, we would be able to develop a holistic approach to Youth Services so that the things that we are doing in public health to prevent and to create and develop healthy youth and we are now looking at things such as lack of physical activity and obesity, that those services would be integrated right along a continuum to providing the services for troubled youth that we are doing now through the Office of Youth Services and we would also be able to work towards improved coordination of public health and social services to the City's growing elderly population and perhaps look at some of the collaborative models that we have seen in other communities. Again, it would be a coordination of payroll, accounting and project management. One thing that we would envision is that by working together we would be more successful in grant writing and project management. Today the Health Department brings in over \$900,000 a year to the community for public health measures. We don't provide all of the services ourselves through the Health Department. Some of that goes out, for example, the homeless for the healthcare services, that money comes from the Health Department and we contract out with Catholic Medical Center today and some of the other money comes through us. We will apply to get the money and the service to Manchester but then the money will go on to one of our community partners who is probably in a better position to find success and our role becomes one of evaluation and monitoring. We would like to think that by bringing everybody together the support of a larger team would lead to more successful grant writing for the City overall and the unified project manager. A larger department provides somewhat of a spin-off benefit and a larger department provides greater opportunities for career growth for employees who might now be in a smaller department. Lastly, there would be improved provision of services to persons whose primary language is not English. As I said, we currently have five

different languages in the Health Department. We have a full-time public health translator who speaks Spanish, a full-time Bosnian translator and a part-time Arabic, Vietnamese and French. With a unified voice I think we would see in the community a greater appreciation of the role of the City Public Health and Community Services Department in developing a healthier community overall. With a unified voice we would have a close coordination of services with community agencies. We all work with community agencies today, but some days it requires that two of the three departments work with the same agencies over the same issues. Lastly, we would develop a team approach to public health and community services, a strong team approach by all being within one organization. Again, with the last organizational structure, the Elderly Services Department would remain intact with budget, payroll and other administrative functions consolidated with the other two departments. The intent is that programs would be strengthened, not weakened, through greater organizational support. In a larger organization, ideas become more cultivated. The more cultivated an idea is, the more successful we are when we go out to get grant money. Certainly as a department head I never felt that I had the best ideas in the Health Department. The ideas get finessed and often come from staff and the work between divisions strengthens ideas. There would be no other immediate changes. The further changes as I said would be based on the strategic planning process within the transition period. This is the organizational chart that we would use for the transition period and if I can just highlight a few things on there. One of them is you will see that the Elderly Services Director and the Elderly Services Department remains intact off to the left side of the chart. The Employee Assistance Program is really kind of a stand-alone human resources function where the important piece for the Employee Assistance Program, as I understand it is one of privacy. Wherever they are located, they need to be able to complete their work with privacy. As far as the administrative functions and the payroll and the bill paying and stuff, that is currently being done by the Health Department today. Certainly I agree and support that Tom Jordan would need to maintain an office in a separate location or with a separate entrance if we go to one building so that he can maintain the privacy of the folks that he serves. The other change that we would make is so that our community health and environmental health activities can continue the way they are going, our Deputy Public Health Director would provide direct attention to those two services. On the right side of the chart I show school health and youth services and currently there is nothing beyond that block. There is no Deputy Health Director for school and youth services. The person would report directly to the Public Health Director. That is the end of my presentation.

Chairman Lopez asked Laurel Buccino, the Acting Director of Youth Services to come forward.

Ms. Buccino stated thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak this evening. I would like to just give you a little background on what the Office of Youth Services does. We were established 31 years ago as a diversion program for the Police Department so that they would not have to refer so many youth first time offenders to court and over the years we have developed some other programs as well but last year we received over 140 referrals just from the Police Department. We do direct services to high-risk youth. We saw over 1,000 youth last year combined short-term crisis counseling, outreach and substance abuse evaluations. Often the youth that we see have no resources and often their families have little or no resources. They are disenfranchised youth often emotionally, physically and psychologically neglected by their parents with substance abuse problems and they are youth that need advocates. There is a fear that in an effort to promote development of the healthy, active youth which is one of the outcomes presented, that these particular children would be lost. When we are talking about the consolidation, I think there are two types that are sometimes melded together. One is a physical consolidation where departments would be in one location and 25 years ago when I started at Youth Services several other departments and ourselves were in the Franklin Street School and that has since been demolished but we were then moved out and the City is paying for rent in various other facilities and often looking for a place to put us all and it hasn't happened yet but I think that putting us all in one place is an excellent idea for the people that we are serving to have resources in one place so they don't need to run around the City and also to save the City money. The other type of consolidation is the administration consolidation and with that I have to say that even back when we first came up with this I had some concerns as did Elderly Services and I did voice the concerns but went along with the plan. Still, there are some concerns about being absorbed by a larger department with a different mission and children who are in most need of services may become lost or less important in that whole process just as the proposed name, which is Health and Human Services. We don't find youth in the name so it is just kind of removing us and the youth that we serve from being in the forefront. That is all I have to say.

Chairman Lopez stated I want to make clear in my own mind what you are saying. Did you agree with this in the beginning and now you don't agree with it? Is that what you are saying?

Ms. Buccino replied I did go along with it. I was new in the position and the Director had just retired. There were a lot of things going on and I thought that this would be beneficial as far as the administrative support. I am just not as sure now. I have concerns and I had concerns all along but I went along with it.

Chairman Lopez asked can you share some of those concerns.

Ms. Buccino answered I did. The fact that the youth would be lost in the process. That is basically it.

Alderman Shea stated obviously when a directive is designed by the Mayor there is a little bit of intimidation involved in the part of an acting department head so I think that might explain a little bit of your concern.

Ms. Buccino replied I know the Mayor does want this to go forward.

Alderman Shea asked but you are in favor of if it were possible to have the Health Department and Youth Services within the same facility.

Ms. Buccino answered I think that is a good idea.

Alderman Shea stated I know that some of your statistical data indicates direct references with police and you. Would it be more advantageous as the Acting Director to have a more direct link with the Police Department rather than with the Health Department?

Ms. Buccino replied we do work more directly with the Police Department. We are in contact with them a few times a week. They send us referrals all of the time. We work with them on different youth and different issues and we get back to them and we do the CHINS petitions for the Police Department.

Alderman Shea asked and that compares to how much contact you have with the Health Department.

Ms. Buccino answered we do some projects with them like the Kicking Butts project. We get referrals from the schools and Police and kind of funnel them to them. We work on immunizations on different projects and getting the word out on immunizations for youth.

Alderman Shea asked but you tend to work more with the Police than with the Health Department.

Ms. Buccino answered we do but we do work together with the Health Department also.

Chairman Lopez asked Barbara Vigneault from Elderly Services to come forward.

Ms. Vigneault stated I would like to start by saying that we have worked with Fred on different issues and Fred does health really well. Fred is a very good Health Director and that is Fred's focus. He runs his department by his ordinance and his

mission and one of the things that is really important is that the ordinances that create a department are the key to what the program is meant to do. If you take away or lose an ordinance then you are losing a law that creates the services for that population. The mission statements are the road maps by which the departments run their activities and their programs and they are the road maps that lead them to fulfilling the goals and objectives of the department. With the loss of those, if they get lost or refined then you are changing and altering the way things are done. My concern with incorporating Elderly into the Health Department is that there is a loss of identity as you see with the name itself – Health and Community Services. Elderly is not even mentioned as a service of Community Services. Community Services could mean a lot of things. You are seeing there right off the bat that there is a loss of identity in that structure just by the name. The other thing is that it is really important to define services for a population. The City of Manchester, in 1986, created the ordinance to develop programs and provide services for their senior population. They did this with a lot of public support. This went out to 10 public meetings and the City and the seniors packed City Hall trying to get that ordinance passed. I don't think from the input that I am getting from them and from staff because a good manager, as Fred said, listens to their staff, that this isn't needed anymore. With our growing elderly population we really need to look at those type of services and to be well aware that that is a real need. Because the City of Manchester is the only City in the State of New Hampshire that has that ordinance, they are taking a lead in the State in having that ordinance and in creating that in 1986. I believe it would be wrong to take that ordinance away. I jotted down some points that Fred had mentioned and one of them was the organizational chart that Fred had talked about. The organizational chart that I was aware of in the initial proposal is a flat line organization with all of the departments underneath as divisions of the Health Department. When you put an elderly department or a youth department that is smaller, it is not a merger of equals, a smaller department into a larger department it becomes part of a larger focus of that department. That larger department takes on that responsibility and takes on that focus and it is a natural thing. If you look at businesses, they did that in the 1980's. They grew larger and now they are cutting back into more accountable structures. There is more accountability to the public if you have a smaller organization. We looked at cost and cost being one of the reasons or one of the benefits of the restructuring. I do not believe there is going to be a cost saving in human services. There is only going to be an increase in cost. In taking a redirection of just staff time is not enough of a savings to give up what the City has already created in individual departments. I don't believe that that is the reason for doing this and I don't think it is a real cost savings. We are not currently located in the same facilities so we cannot share the machines or staff and we are all short-staffed. The Health Department is short-staffed and admittedly Fred has said that and Laurel has said that. We are all short-staffed and no one can give up staff to help another department for providing those type of

services. We do coordinate and we can provide better and improved services through coordination. We all coordinate with other agencies, albeit to provide services. We help other agencies get grants to provide those particular services that are in our expertise. As Fred said you can be an expert in all fields and you have to really be knowledgeable and have that expertise in the field that you are working in and be able to plan and develop those programs that are necessary in order to implement them in the community. I really think that is an important point. The Mayor has created a Task Force to make a 10 year plan for services for the elderly, however, last year Fred was put in charge as the Chairman of that Committee and it kind of got waylaid and lost because of September 11 and Fred's very real need in the community to do emergency planning. We see that the focus that Fred is doing is a health-related focus. We are taking care of people's isolation and those goals. They really need to be addressed in other ways and it could be transportation, housing, income...all of those things that make a good quality of life and not just a real health focus. It is a real overall quality of life issue. I am unaware of and I have not seen until tonight the latest organizational chart. Fred had said that it was presented in June but I had not seen it. The last organizational chart I saw in the proposal was a flat line organization. Until now, I have not seen anything further on the consolidation except for the notification that it was coming before HR. It was stopped in the fall and now it has begun again.

Alderman Pinard asked Barbara, can you elaborate on professionals from agencies. What do you mean? How big is your staff?

Ms. Vigneault answered we have five people.

Alderman Pinard asked explain to me what "professionals from other agencies" means.

Ms. Vigneault answered what we do is we coordinate with the other agencies and other resources out there. There are many agencies that provide services to seniors in the community as you well know and we work with them and coordinate with them in order to plan and implement programs in the community. We help identify needs and we work on special projects with them and help them get support for grants and different things so that we can meet the needs in the community for seniors. The programs themselves may be provided through a particular agency once we work on those issues and plan those projects and get the help and funds to run them because we don't take that onto the City's back. We try to get the City to provide services within the community and help them with the resources in order to meet the needs of the seniors through those agencies that have that expertise. As I mentioned before, it could be transportation agencies, it could be housing agencies, it could be income agencies or recreational.

Alderman Pinard asked do you apply for grants.

Ms. Vigneault answered as I said we try not to put it on the backs of the City with grants but we try to work with the agencies, because of our limited staff and we don't have a grant writer and I have put in for the last two years for a coordinator position and as Fred said there is a missing piece, a coordinator position with grant writing opportunities for the department and it has been denied. The City, I understand, is looking at perhaps getting a grant writer and I think that would be a fantastic idea because we could utilize those resources but we don't want to compete with the agencies we want to coordinate with them and help them provide services to the community. The easiest way with such a small staff is to help others in that. I know that for instance it could be a letter of support or a sub-committee that is working with those agencies. I know that Fred is involved with Greater Manchester Mental Health and we have written letters of support for grants that they have had.

Alderman Pinard asked so you could work with Fred if this was passed. Your department could work with Fred?

Ms. Vigneault answered we have coordinated on a number of things. Fred's department has...this year we had a flu clinic together and sponsored the flu clinic at the senior center. A lot can be done with coordination.

Alderman Shea stated I just had the benefit of this particular paper or brochure as it were so my questions are taken from that and directed mostly to Fred. The restructuring of Health, Elderly and Youth Services into a Department of Public Health and Community Services is the intent. How have budgetary concerns presently being addressed? In other words, payroll wise what happens so that we can get a grasp on that? You mentioned before how your department helps out Youth Services is that correct?

Mr. Rusczek replied correct.

Alderman Shea asked and who helps out Elderly Services.

Mr. Rusczek answered nobody from the Health Department today. Barbara and her staff currently do all of the work related to financing and budgeting.

Alderman Shea asked so basically there would be absolutely no change if she remained separate. In other words if their department was not absorbed into yours, that would have no impact on the Health Department and if it were

absorbed it would have an impact because then you would have to handle her payroll, limited as it is to five employees?

Mr. Rusczek answered that is correct. That would be about the size of one of our divisions.

Alderman Shea asked so that would add work to your department.

Mr. Rusczek answered that would fall under our work, correct.

Alderman Shea asked in this particular statement or the statements here, it says the goal of restructuring is to improve efficiency. Could you list specific approaches or proposals that would justify this proposal?

Mr. Rusczek answered the improved efficiencies again would come if we were able to reduce the number of people who need to maintain the competencies and skills to do the payroll, budgeting and financing for the Elderly Services Department. That should free up time that could then go to improve services and planning.

Alderman Shea asked you just go through telling me that you don't handle anything that has to do with financials for them.

Mr. Rusczek answered if the departments came together and we brought Elderly Services within the Health Department, the financial functions would then be handled by the same person who does Health and OYS and that is where the time savings would come for the Office of Elderly Services.

Alderman Shea replied you just got through telling me that you don't handle those things. I just asked you and you said you don't handle them now.

Mr. Rusczek responded I must have misunderstood you. We do handle it for Health and Youth Services.

Alderman Shea asked but you don't for the elderly.

Mr. Rusczek answered no.

Alderman Shea replied that is what I am saying. It would add more staff or time to your department.

Mr. Rusczek responded it wouldn't add more staff. It would be some more workload but again given the size of the program that would be incorporated

within the work we do. For example, if we grow by four or five people and take on another grant or two, there are things that we absorb as we grow.

Alderman Shea asked how do you plan to expand services that could not be accomplished by restructuring. What services would you expand that aren't already in place?

Mr. Rusczek answered do you mean in terms of senior services.

Alderman Shea replied yes.

Mr. Rusczek responded as we indicated, what we all felt when we were at the table was that rather than try to plan and say what the services are that we need to come together and do that collaboratively. In other words so all staff can sit and talk about what can be accomplished and how it can be funded rather than the Public Health Director just come out and say well we are going to do this, that and the other thing. Instead of that sort of autocratic approach, we really felt that we should design our programs through a team approach.

Alderman Shea asked so you are saying that right now if the elderly stayed by themselves they wouldn't expand services to the same degree that would be possible if they weren't under a restructuring kind of situation. Is that what you are saying?

Mr. Rusczek replied I believe there would be expanded and enhanced services if it was part of a larger organization, you are correct.

Alderman Shea asked could you give me some example of, and I am going with what is written here, how time currently lost for administrative functions would be saved under a reconstructing of departments. How can you save administrative functions?

Mr. Rusczek answered for each of our departments or at least for Elderly and for Health, we have someone who has to learn the City's financial system, the HTE system, learn the system of payroll and learn all of the nuisances that go with administering payroll and finance. That all takes time to not only learn it but to maintain that. There is time that it takes to do the monthly bill statements and to do the weekly payroll. All that time, if it is all done by one individual and that is all they do as is currently the case in the Health Department, it is much more efficient to have one person handle 70 individuals and payroll then to say handle four. The learning curve and the knowledge required by both is very similar.

Alderman Shea asked isn't someone doing that now.

Mr. Rusczek answered for Health and the Office of Youth Services, yes and somebody is doing it at Elderly Services Department.

Alderman Shea asked so what would they have to learn.

Mr. Rusczek answered it changes all of the time. The City's financial system has changed a lot through the years.

Alderman Shea asked but if there is a restructuring they would still have to change it because there would be a change for the Health Department as it were, which has the majority of workers and you were saying before that Elderly doesn't even come under your payroll right now and it is handled by them. I am not quite sure exactly how much administrative functions would be affected by that.

Mr. Rusczek answered what I am saying is the work that they are currently doing they wouldn't have to do and that the time that is spent doing some of these routine functions could be handled by the same person who does it for the Office of Youth Services and Health and that would be time saved for the Director.

Alderman DeVries stated I have a few questions off of the same worksheet that was sent out to us. Within the budgets that will be presented for this forthcoming year, they will stay intact? Obviously you are not going to try to make any consolidation of the budgets while you are working together as a group. This is conceptual and you are saying you will take a year or something to put an actual plan together?

Mr. Rusczek replied you are correct. If one of the issues is that there will be a loss of resources from any one of the programs than in the budget process it will be my recommendation that when it is approved by the Aldermen we have separate organizations showing. For example, right now within the Health Department we have four organizations. Organization 4105 is all of our community health activities so we know what it costs. We have one for school health. I would recommend that the Aldermen do the same and that we have an organization specifically for Elderly Services functions and for the Youth Services functions and then it can be monitored right along whether or not there is a loss of services.

Alderman DeVries asked are you saying that the independent departments or divisions would continue to put together their own budgets.

Mr. Rusczek answered as we do in the Health Department today the individual divisions have tremendous input on the budget. This year the budgets would be prepared by the individual departments. As we come together under one

department, the divisions would be funneling their program budgets up to be incorporated into one larger budget. In other words, the Chief of our Division of Environmental Health certainly puts together the stuff that he will need to run his shop and that all gets moved up into a larger department budget.

Alderman DeVries asked so there wouldn't be a great savings and time for the division head or department head because you will still be putting together your budgets and costing...maybe not doing payroll but timesheets and that sort of thing so you are saying that probably the only cost saving is going to come in some administrative function of payroll but not record keeping?

Mr. Rusczek answered when you look at the level of work involved to put together a division budget where there really doesn't have to be the depth and calculations and entering into a system, that is not at the same level as a department budget. That is much more involved and fine-tuned and going through a person that is paid and benefits and crafting it so division heads work in the Health Department today is not equal to a department head's work if you follow me.

Alderman DeVries replied to an extent. What would happen should there be another payroll study? I know we went through Yarger Decker five years ago I think where a department head is going to become a division head how is that going to affect their status? I understand that you are not looking to eliminate any positions but is it going to classify them down and do you see savings in that?

Mr. Rusczek responded currently if you look at the Elderly Services Director it is a pay grade 20 and I certainly wouldn't propose that that get moved down. The Youth Services supervisor position I think is a grade 20 as well and that is Laurel's position. She has been acting department head for the past several months to a year.

Alderman DeVries replied I am not familiar with the different pay grades. Ginny, maybe you could give us some input as to whether you think if there was a reclassification that would be affected.

Ms. Lamberton responded I am not sure what you are asking.

Alderman DeVries asked if there were to be another study similar to Yarger Decker where they are going to be reclassified from a department head to a division head and their duties will be shifting somewhat through this conceptual plan are they likely to be losing status and payroll.

Ms. Lamberton answered in order to answer that question properly one would have to go through an analysis of the positions. I don't see the Elderly Services

Director position being impacted based on what I know about that. I can't answer the question for the Youth Services Director title. That is a labor grade 26 and other deputies I am not sure about. I would really have to analyze those jobs to answer your question properly.

Alderman DeVries stated the reason I bring it up is you had noted in your chart when you were talking about weaknesses with the pay disparities and I assume that is where you are headed with the pay disparities.

Mr. Rusczek replied this was put together by the different departments and you are correct. Under Health I think I...when we looked at this it was also including the Welfare Department and I don't see pay disparities here but the pay disparities also included things like the Welfare Supervisor at a pay grade 22, Elderly Services Director at grade 20, Supervisor of School Health at 21 with 36 direct reports. There may be pay disparities in the larger organization that would have to get sorted out somewhere in that transition period.

Alderman DeVries asked where does Welfare fall into the fold of this concept now. Have you eliminated them at this time?

Mr. Rusczek answered yes. Partly because the organizational structure in the City Charter establishes that the department head is an elected official and partly because the difference between these three departments is they do have income qualifiers and the population they serve is more finite than the community at large services that the three of us provide.

Alderman Sysyn asked would the fact that the Health Department would be taking over these other departments make them...wouldn't they come in for higher classifications because they are taking on more responsibilities.

Mr. Rusczek answered there was no...back at the very original concept that I put together and I am using that as the extreme, we all agreed that we should work together. The only change that I showed was that I was hoping that in the future...my concept was that there would be a division of school and youth services so we would have one coordinated voice for school and youth all the way up through. At that time we were proposing to create a second deputy position. Our deputies are currently a pay grade 25. That was the only change that I had envisioned in that. I should clarify that. Also so that we would have parity I think we were looking at moving the people who were pay grade 20 to 21 so that all of the supervisors were the same. It was all within the same budgets – the savings of the pay grade 26 Office of Youth Services position that Regis Lemaire retired from would allow for the upgrades of the two supervisors to pay grade 21 as well as the creation of a second deputy at grade 25. That plan is no longer on the table.

That was taken off as we talked about stepping back and looking at this together over a period of a year.

Chairman Lopez asked regarding the strengths for the youth and elderly and opportunities, it seems that they outweigh the weaknesses and the threats. Do you agree with that and if you don't could you explain to me why?

Ms. Vigneault answered I would like to go over these a little bit because I want to mention that what I think is important is the difference of the degree between each one. I think for instance the strengths, when you have administrative support yes that is a strength and a larger organization can give more clout. The Health Department is a larger organization and it has more clout. What takes that away...the weakness in that is that you lose the identity and visibility in the community as part of a larger organization that is not of a similar nature. As Fred had mentioned in his presentation, we don't have duplicative programs. We don't duplicate services. The opportunities about funding support and grants and the nursing and clerical support, as I mentioned we do coordinate with Fred's department like for instance with the flu vaccine. We can do those opportunities that are listed I believe without having to consolidate and to lose the ordinance and mission statement. I believe the City has those resources as well in other departments that we really do need to look at...if we can coordinate with other agencies within the community to help provide services to our special, separate, unsimilar, unlike populations then we can also do that within our City structure.

Chairman Lopez stated while you are going through that let me ask you another question. It says "most costly for future growth." What do you mean by that?

Ms. Vigneault replied as I mentioned in the beginning I think that Fred and Laurel will probably agree with me that the cost of Human Services because of the different populations that we serve are going to be increasing because of the importance of having a well community and a community that is offering the best for the people who live here. We need to focus on that and I think that being in the field of Elderly Services or Youth Services or Health we do need to look at increasing services to the people of Manchester and to do that the best we can and find innovative and creative means in order to do that. I think we all have done a good job of that but more needs to be done.

Chairman Lopez asked do you feel that in writing the grants, which you haven't had the opportunity to do because you don't have a grant writer, that the Health Department could help you in that area. With you being separate could they do it or would it be combined?

Ms. Vigneault answered we have worked with the Police Department. The Police Department has a grant writer who I believe is the only grant writer in the City. We have worked with them. I think you can work with different departments without losing the identity to be involved in becoming within that structure.

Chairman Lopez asked how would you consider that you would “lose staff” to other functions and organizations. How do you visualize that?

Ms. Vigneault answered when you are in a larger organization and to explain a little bit about those concerns, if you have someone with a certain focus, for instance say the health focus and they are making decisions on the overall organization, their decisions are based upon the needs of that organization and should something happen in that organization where funds are needed for specific projects or there is an emergency of some kind that they feel is a great need, then you have that risk of losing resources from some division or department underneath that organization to that special function. When you merge funds from one to the other like that you have that risk.

Chairman Lopez asked is there any benefit and maybe you can comment on it, accountability and control and planning and all three of you can answer the question as to whether you have a three year or five year plan for accountability and control.

Mr. Ruscsek answered the Health Department does do strategic planning and we look five years out and identify what our issues are likely to be and how we hope to achieve them. A lot of times it is looking at outside funding opportunities. In terms of accountability, that is a good question. What we do in the department is every month we provide reports to our Board of Health in terms of our service activities and issues and discussions of the problems that we face. Monthly we have not only division level activity reports but productivity reports where we measure our services against our capacity. I think those are the two primary areas. Yes we do strategic planning and we have a system of accountability.

Ms. Vigneault stated as I mentioned before, we have a group of Elderly Services agencies that works together monthly on issues relating to the elderly and we work on needs and develop projects to meet those needs. In doing so, we have a good grasp of what the community needs are. As you know, we have been hard at work trying to develop and you have been very helpful in trying to develop a senior center that can accommodate many of the seniors needs and social and other quality of life issues within that larger organization. We as a department have the senior centers as part of that, programs of the department, and those senior centers need space particularly the West Side facility needs space in order to

accommodate the seniors that are wanting and needing that type of room and those type of various activities and facilities to meet those needs.

Chairman Lopez asked do you have a three-year or five-year plan in writing.

Ms. Vigneault answered we have a business strategy that I have that I can hand out to you. We have been working...as I said last year we had worked with a Task Force to develop the 10-year plan and we haven't met in a few months because of what happened on September 11. That again is working with the other agencies and services within the community because they are very vital in networking and providing services for seniors.

Ms. Buccino stated we have our goals year to year and we do have our strategic plan, which I don't have with me. Our goals for the coming year are to continue to work on finding adolescent substance abuse treatment and working on prevention and working with the Police Department on shoplifting programs, etc.

Chairman Lopez stated just to clarify, you are now the Acting Department Head and you are receiving the pay as a department head.

Ms. Buccino replied yes.

Chairman Lopez stated I believe that would still remain if the Board of Mayor and Aldermen decided to go with a pilot program for one year. You would still get that.

Ms. Buccino replied I am not sure.

Chairman Lopez stated at least this Alderman would indicate that.

Alderman Thibault stated I have a few questions. First of all, I would like to just reiterate that I was on the Board of the Office of Youth Services when it first started in 1974 or 1975. I feel that in my opinion there has been a lax and a problem there as to exactly what the focus was of that Board when I was a Commissioner. Going along with what you bring up, Mr. Chairman, and what some of the Aldermen have brought up with the elderly center, sitting here tonight as the new Chairman of the Lands and Buildings Committee, which is going to be charged with doing something with the elderly center, which is something that should have been done two and a half years ago let me just say that Fred Ruscsek in my opinion is one of the better administrators that we have in this City. Fred and I go back a long way. I see how he has run a department and he has done a great job, a fantastic job. I certainly don't want to take any thunder away from you Fred in saying this but I do believe to some extent what Barbara just brought

up is true. I think we lose some of the identity here of elderly services and what we do for the elderly and I just want to make sure that we don't lose that identity. If we go along and there are cuts in the Health Department, how would it affect the Health Department and how would it affect the Youth Services Department? I am very concerned about that having served on the Youth Services Board and being very involved with Elderly Services as it is today. I wonder if you could just give me some idea, Fred, as to how you would structure your budget to make sure that no one department is hurt by how you would administer that.

Mr. Rusczek replied first thank you for the compliments. I do enjoy the long working relationship that we have had and I am not certain if I have been here longer than you or not. You need to first understand that if there is a Department of Public Health and Community Services then all of the folks that would work under that umbrella become people who I would be personally invested in. These people would become my family and it is difficult to choose between programs should budget cuts need to be made. You can see when I look at the threat, the threat that I would see in a larger organization would be that as a large organization the Aldermen would think that we then have more fat. The fact is that wouldn't be the case. We have a lot of health and human services needs that aren't being met. The other piece that we would bring, though, Alderman is that because we would be a larger program it would also be part of my responsibility to go out and get the resources to meet the needs as it is today with the programs that we provide, whether it is school health or community health or environmental health or dental health. It is my job to get the resources to make the programs work and that is what I look at as my primary responsibility. That would continue with whatever departments.

Alderman Thibault asked that would include these departments. Is that what you are saying?

Mr. Rusczek answered yes.

Alderman Shea asked, Barbara, in this particular document it gave examples of how the needs, the plans, the accomplishments and organizational issues relating to elderly services would be different under restructuring than they are presently. Now if there were no restructuring and if it were voted down by this Committee or by the Aldermen, would you see any difference in your needs, your plans, your accomplishments and your organizational issues that couldn't be handled by your department as it presently exists rather than under a restructuring program?

Ms. Vigneault answered as I mentioned we have a very large increase in the elderly population and we have to plan and we have to promote changes in service delivery to meet those needs because we are going to have more demand for

service. So I think that the City and working with other community organizations to be innovative in program planning and to increase services within the community as a whole we need to look at. We need to look at furthering the City's role in guiding and networking and helping access those resources for community services. That is definitely an issue that is coming up because we need to get heavily into community coordination and that is one of the reasons that I have continually asked for the coordinator position. That is something that we really do need to address with senior organizations in the community.

Alderman Shea stated what I am trying to get in my mind or visualize is your department right now has certain plans, needs and so forth. If you were under a different organization, you would then have to bring these same needs, plans, whatever to that and then that would have to be sorted out so that there wouldn't be, in essence, any difference between what you brought to the table and what your needs are in terms of staying as an Elderly Service Department at that time. I guess the difference that Fred has brought out is that maybe by having someone in that particular organization maybe there would be a different exchange of ideas and so forth that might compliment but there wouldn't be any specific differences on general needs as it were. Is that correct?

Ms. Vigneault replied I think that the important thing to note is that we all have expertise in different fields and with a Public Health Organization, Fred would be the spokesperson for the department and the divisions would communicate to Fred about the needs and then the decisions would be made at the administrative level on how to provide those services.

Alderman Shea asked you have an Elderly Commission. What is their opinion about the merger or restructuring? Are they in favor of it or opposed to it?

Ms. Vigneault answered as Fred had mentioned in his presentation, the Commission did ask for Fred to come over and Fred did come over and speak to them and explain what the plan was all about. After that, they took a vote to see where they stood on the plan and that vote came out as being against it.

Alderman Shea stated we know that it is a very harsh evening and a very windy evening and I notice that there are several seniors here. May I ask would you folks please raise your hand if you are in favor of keeping the Elderly Services Department as it is? Are any of you opposed to it? Are you here because you are in favor of the Elderly Services Department remaining separate? You have a consensus of elderly people. Are they in favor of keeping it as it is?

Ms. Vigneault replied as I said before I think it is important because in 1986 the elderly people of this community were the ones that wanted the City to provide a

department that was directly responsible for providing services for that population. I think that seniors in general are aware that the City should have that obligation to that special population.

Alderman Shea stated in the statement here it says service issues and in it it says “reducing the administrative workload for the elderly through such a reconstruction would enhance community services since recaptured administrative time could be redirected to service needs.” Now if this were a positive, then additional administrative workloads would occur on you, Fred, and also on anyone else. So, I can’t understand how by adding some elderly department to your administration it wouldn’t increase your workload or a deputy’s workload. It just doesn’t seem as if your workload would be reduced as it were. How does that...you have two extra departments here? How would that reduce your workload?

Mr. Rusczek replied I didn’t say it would reduce my workload. I think we said it would reduce the Elderly Services Director’s workload so that the time could go...I look at this as more work for me. I don’t look at this as less work for me. We have a lot of senior service issues before this community. We have the development of a senior center. Certainly that would add workload to me.

Alderman Shea responded I believe Alderman Sysyn brought that out and I don’t mean to be the devil’s advocate but with more workload...you know Frank Thomas has come before us and we have said Frank you poor fellow you are doing five jobs now. You are going to be wearing three hats maybe so it is obvious that it is not going to be less money. I am not being critical but you are going to come back and say my wife doesn’t see me and I can’t play hockey at night anymore and I am all tied up. What I am saying is we certainly are not going to have less of a financial impact. The other point that I want to bring out is, and Barbara hit upon this but it is always the low man or woman on the totem pole that gets whacked. If there is some kind of a reduction that has to take place and there are 4.5 people working in the Elderly Services Department, you know what is going to happen don’t you? There is going to be four instead of four and a half because the Mayor says we need a 2% cut and all of the sudden all of these things are examined and we need to have nurses in the schools and health officers checking people with all kinds of problems so there is a little bit of a savings. That is my concern. You know where I stand obviously.

Mr. Rusczek replied I think I know where you stand and I did give up hockey already and my wife doesn’t see me at night now. The role of this position would be somewhat different. To make this all work and to work to get the resources needed to work towards the senior center with the services and stuff would definitely take more of my time. If you look at the organizational chart that was in

this that was submitted to the Aldermen in August, you will note that the Deputy Public Health Director today, Richard DiPentima, would take over the line duties relating to environmental health and community health. He is a person who is exceptionally qualified to do so. That would free up...I would in some ways walk away from those duties other than when it is a true crisis. That would free up if you will or would allow me to refocus energies on getting the resources and the outside funding and stuff for a senior center. That is why it was designed that way.

Alderman Shea stated my commentary is that Frank Thomas not only got a raise but Kevin Sheppard did as well.

Chairman Lopez stated I want to make it clear that the way I read this and what has been presented is a one-year sunset plan to combine, which is authorized under the Charter, either to establish, eliminate or combine services. This would be the minuses and pluses that would come back to this existing Board if the Board of Mayor and Aldermen would approve such a combined operation to find out what could be done. I fully understand about the identity of the elderly but this Alderman believes that we can do more in this community for our elderly. Barbara, you mentioned that we are the only City in the State of New Hampshire that has an ordinance for the elderly. I say this and I am not faulting anyone, but other communities have more in their community for elderly than Manchester does. That is the direction I am going in. Whatever the case may be, whether you are alone and you keep your own department or whether you combine and find out what the minuses and pluses are, I will always strive to do better for the elderly in this City because I think that the City of Manchester is missing the boat. It is fine for people who can come out and drive their car to go to different functions, but I believe that there are a lot of elderly people in the City of Manchester who would just love to have a van come over and pick them up and take them over to the senior center when nobody else wants to drive them over or whatever the case may be. Other communities have...I know there are grants in the transportation department for this. I think there is a lot of pluses here and the territorial ground that we are speaking of is a year that has been presented to look at those minuses and pluses and keeping you identity as the elderly department and youth services department and not lose any authority or any pay or any personnel and for all three of you to come back to this Board if this was approved and tell us if it is not working. I don't think any of us in here can...we don't know the answers. I surely don't know if it is great or in between but surely with the expertise that all three of you have, could come back and say no it is not working and these are the reasons it won't work. You haven't lost your budget and you haven't lost anything other than trying to do more for the community as one instead of divided. On 2/1 I notice that you had a meeting with the Mayor. Did all three of you have a meeting or was that just with you, Fred?

Mr. Rusczek replied we all had a meeting on that date. When we went into the meeting on 2/1 at that time I thought we were all in concurrence. The Office of Youth Services was as I said earlier in concurrence and the Health Department and that is when we learned of the Elderly Services Department's deep concerns.

Chairman Lopez stated here we are today and I will ask the same question. Do you still have your same reservations Barbara and Laurel?

Ms. Vigneault replied if you take away the ordinance that creates the individual departments and the mission statements, you have to create that under a different organization.

Chairman Lopez stated let me ask Dan Muller. We have an ordinance, can we keep that ordinance and obey it and do a sunset temporary ordinance?

Mr. Muller replied in order to restructure any existing department, what would have to occur under the terms of the Charter is a new ordinance would have to be adopted that would spell out the functions and responsibilities of the restructured department or departments. Nine members of the Board would have to approve that otherwise under the terms of the Charter the existing departments have to remain as they are currently organized.

Chairman Lopez asked can we put into that ordinance a sunset clause that it will cease and the original ordinance will take place one year from date.

Mr. Muller answered I would want to give a little more thought to that. Just looking at the Charter quickly it would seem that once you make a restructure...the Charter does not distinguish between a temporary restructuring or permanent restructuring. It just talks about restructuring period. It would seem to suggest that if you decided that you wanted to go back you would have to go back through the same procedure. You would have to again adopt ordinances for new departments, which in this case would seem to go back to the old ones and again that would have to be approved by nine members of the Board.

Chairman Lopez asked there is no way that you can just make a sunset ordinance.

Mr. Muller answered I can check into that further, but just looking at it quickly it appears that the procedure that is contemplated again is if there is any restructuring you have to go through the procedure set forth in Section 3.01, which is the ordinance for the description of functions that is approved by nine members of the Board.

Chairman Lopez stated the only other thing I can say is that the same people who make decisions here today will be here next year.

Alderman Pinard asked did I read that every three months somebody has to report to the Board of Aldermen.

Mr. Rusczech answered yes.

Alderman Pinard stated I think we should go ahead with this and give it a year's try and have them report to us every three months and if we find something wrong we can say something.

Alderman Pinard moved to approve the proposal for one year. There was no second.

Alderman Shea moved to deny the proposal for consolidation. Alderman Sysyn duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Lopez called for a vote on the motion. The motion carried with Alderman Pinard being duly recorded in opposition.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee